

Prince Chapel African Methodist  
Episcopal Church  
70 West 17th Street  
Tucson  
Pima County  
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-73-40

HABS,  
ARIZ,  
10-TUCSO,  
30/40-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20243

BARRIO LIBRE (Barrio Histórico)

PRINCE CHAPEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH HABS No. AZ-73-40

Location: 70 W. 17th Street, northeast corner of intersection of South Convent Ave., and West 17th Street. Tucson, Pima County, Arizona.

Present Owner and Occupant: John H. Lightfoot.

Present Use: Residential.

Significance: This structure with its high hipped roof was built as a church in 1912 and housed two different black congregations until the 1960s. The exposed brick was plastered over in the 1970s before its sale to an artist who converted it for use as a studio. The height of the building and its four large arched, grilled windows make it a dominant anchor at the southern end of S. Convent Ave.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1912
2. Architect: None known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: See chain of title below:

Block 240, Lot 13, arb. 31.

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| 1912 | Deed, May 29, 1912, recorded in Volume 52, page 307. J. W. Raven and Jeff McNeil to Trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church et al.            |
| 1942 | Deed, September 8, 1942, recorded in Volume 246, page 526. The Prince Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church et al to Casimira R. and Angelita Bravo. |
| 1950 | Deed, November 10, 1950, recorded in Volume 298, page 552. Estate of Casimiro Bravo to Angelita Bravo et al.   |
| 1963 | Deed, January 31, 1963, recorded in Volume 2050, page 596. Estate of Angelita E. Bravo.  |
| 1963 | Deed, July 23, 1963, recorded in Volume 2130, page 202. Lopez et al to Bravo et al.  |
| 1968 | Deed, April 11, 1968, recorded in Volume 3221, page 54. Figuerva et al to Bravo et al and T. Amarillas.  |

4. Builder: Juan Vindiola.

5. Alterations and additions: A fire in 1938-39 partially destroyed this structure, but it was rebuilt. The original brick was plastered over in 1975-76.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The Prince Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, on the corner of S. Convent Avenue and W. 17th Street, was the second black church in Tucson. The congregation, composed of a number of black families from all over Tucson, met in a private home until they were able to raise the necessary funds to build this church in 1912. Juan Vindiola, the builder, was a laborer who lived in the Barrio. When a fire destroyed part of the structure in 1938-39, the congregation met at the nearby Drachman School while repairs were made. In 1941 the Prince Chapel A. M. E. congregation built a new church at Stone Avenue and W. 17th Street, a block away. The building continued to be used as a black church, the Faith Temple congregation meeting there from 1954-1957, and the Revelation Baptist Church from 1960-1967. In 1976 an artist purchased the building and converted it for use as a studio and residence because of the large windows and availability of light.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION (See Significance, above, and Barrio Libre (Barrio Historico) (HABS No. AZ-73) for site plan and historical background essay.)

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, 1909, 1914, 1919, 1948.

Tract Books, Pioneer National Title Insurance Company (Recorder's records on microfilm).

Tucson City Directories, 1897-1979.

Tucson Daily Citizen, "House Can Be a Home After Being a Church" by John Bret-Harte, July 8, 1976, p. 10.

Oral Interviews:

Norman Preston (one of the original members).

Adelina Flores; 56 W. Kennedy St.

Eliazar Herreras, 1331 E. Waverly.

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Historic American Buildings Survey  
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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's National Architectural and Engineering Record (NAER) in cooperation with the Tucson Barrio Association, Inc. Funds for the project were provided by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office and the Arizona State Office of Economic Planning and Development. Under the direction of Robert Kapsch, Chief of NAER, John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect, the project was completed during the summer of 1980 at the HABS field office in Tucson, Arizona, by Robert C. Giebner, Project Supervisor (Professor of Architecture, University of Arizona); William Joseph Graham, Project Foreman (University of Maryland); Ann E. Huston, Project Historian (California State University, Sacramento); Maureen L. Gerhold, Assistant Historian (Pennsylvania State University); Student Architects Scott Marshall Dolph (University of Arizona); Carol Jean Lemon (Washington State University); and Harrison Adam Sutphin (Virginia Tech); and Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Summer Youth Employment Program Interns: Maria Arriola (Tucson High School); Ernest Cota; Lupita Lopez (Tucson High School) and Anna Trinidad. Photographic records were made for HABS by David J. Kaminsky, Photographer, Roswell, New Mexico. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in 1981 in the HABS Washington Office by William Joseph Graham, Architect, and Lucy Pope Wheeler, Writer/Editor, of the professional staff.

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